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which Burke died, at Cooper's Creek; as also a specimen of the Nardoo plant, were exhibited.

The Papers read were—

1. *Despatch from His Excellency* SIR HENRY BARCLAY, Governor of Victoria, on the Expedition which, under the late MR. R. O'HARA BURKE and MR. W. J. WILLS, with MESSRS. GREY and KING, succeeded in crossing the Australian Continent from Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria.*

[Communicated by His Grace the DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.]

2. *Journals of the Expedition, with the Astronomical Observations of* MR. W. J. WILLS.

[Communicated by GOVERNOR BARCLAY to SIR RODERICK I. MURCHISON.]

THE sad intelligence reached Melbourne on the 2nd of November, that Messrs. Burke and Wills, the leaders of the Victoria Camel Expedition, had perished of starvation at Cooper's Creek, after having successfully accomplished the object of their mission by opening a road across the continent to the Gulf of Carpentaria.

On arriving at Cooper's Creek, they found the small dépôt they had left there had been abandoned the same morning, and that the large relief party they expected from the Darling had never arrived. One of the two men who travelled with them, alone survives: the journal and route-map have been saved. The geographical results of the expedition are as follows:—

The distance from Menindee on the Darling to Torowato Swamp, lat. $30^{\circ} 2'$, long. $142^{\circ} 36'$, was about 200 miles, and the road lay through a fine grazing country. There was no difficulty about water, as creeks or water-holes, many of them important ones, were found at distances never exceeding 20 miles.

From Torowato to Wright's Creek (lat. $28^{\circ} 48'$, long. $142^{\circ} 53'$) the road was good; thence to Cooper's Creek it was stony, but not impracticable. The feed on Cooper's Creek was satisfactory; but the flies, mosquitos, and rats which abounded there, made it a very disagreeable residence. Wills has no doubt but that Wright's Creek was the lower part of the Warrego River. Burke considered that the road from the Darling to Cooper's Creek ought to be established more to the westward than the line he followed.

Four excursions were made without success from the easterly part of Cooper's Creek, to discover a practicable route due northward, according to instructions. On one occasion Mr. Wills travelled

* The principal part of this despatch is printed in p. 68.

90 miles without finding water. The whole country had a deplorably arid appearance.

Mr. Burke's account of the journey from Cooper's Creek to Carpentaria, which he buried in a bottle on his return, is: "We have discovered a practicable route to Carpentaria, the principal portion of which lies in the 140th meridian of east longitude. Between this and the Stony Desert there is some good country. From thence to the tropic the country is dry and stony. Between the tropic and Carpentaria a considerable portion is rangy (*i. e.* hilly), but it is well watered and richly grassed." Mr. Wills' more detailed report fully bears out this description.

The longitudes of four points in the route have been worked out carefully at the William's Town Observatory, from Mr. Wills' records of lunar distances and eclipses of Jupiter's satellites. These careful reductions are based on Greenwich observations, and modify Wills' approximate determinations, which were, of course, calculated from the 'Nautical Almanack' data. They are as follows:—

Latitude.			Longitude.
17° 54'	..	..	No observation.
18° 12'	..	..	140° 59'
18° 16'	..	..	141° 28'
18° 22'	..	..	141° 15'
19° 14'	..	..	140° 55'

By correcting Mr. Wills' route-map according to these more accurate results, we have probably an exact knowledge of the path taken by the expedition. His latitudes are numerous.

The third Paper read was—

3. *Proceedings of the Exploring Party, under MR. F. T. GREGORY, in North West Australia.*

MR. F. GREGORY sailed to Nickol Bay, on the north-west coast of Australia, and commenced his explorations on June 11th, a considerably later period than he had desired. He travelled till October 21st, passing over more than 2000 miles in consecutive expeditions from the coast, following the courses of different rivers, but on no one occasion penetrating very far into the interior. His results are the discovery of numerous periodical rivers and a vast amount of grazing country within the tropics, of which not less than 2 or 3 million acres lay within the limits of his route. The physical features of the land present a succession of terraces rising inland for nearly 200 miles, more or less broken by volcanic hills